

Drew Devito
Headache

Allen's head bumbles
Before he dies in Vietnam.

Brandon.

 Brandon.
Look at Brandon's face
not his legs.
Brandon was rude.
Brandon is gone. Don't dishonor the dead Allen says.
Maybe they can get you into heaven.
It's like go-fish. Do you have any sevens?
Did you give at church? Did you pray? Did you only fuck after you were
married?
Oh well I think I have a pair.
Brandon wouldn't be up there
Brandon would smell up heaven
Every step would stink.

Brandon lit a woman on fire.
She didn't talk to Brandon. She didn't talk to Allen. So Brandon spoke to her
the only way he knew how.

 "Smell -er burn up like that? That's real
fireworks."
Allen wonders if she will talk to him now
Wonders if she can stand his smell.

-1

Allen was a good boy.
Grew up in Missouri.
Lived in Missouri.
Left Missouri.
Always thought he was going to die
in Missouri.

Wanted to make Pop proud.
Should have found him a nice *girl*.
“Find yourself a nice *girl*.” So then he said he would.

-2

Randy always walked Allen to school.
Maybe they walked each other.
When no one looked, Randy held Allen’s arm.

Allen’s hands were wild when he came back
From doing things Randy would never see.
They sent those hands back.

They didn’t even wait.
They didn’t budge.
Those hands could get people.

Allen loved Randy’s parents.
Loved their homemade macaroni.
Loved their dog wall-clock.

Loved their dining room table with the floral design.
Loved their chatty family.
Randy's Mom always saying he was too quiet.
Randy's Mom always saying he should speak up more.
Randy's Mom said she liked when he spoke.

To Randy:
It's so hot at night
We keep moving
No one will tell me where.
I just keep reminding myself
you said you'll be home.

- *Allen*

-3

To Dead Paulie, Remember
following missiles
in the nighttime
rising and
falling
right in front of our eyes.
They were so fast,
they move slowly
for me now.
Remember? They were our "friendly neighbors."
But,
They were so far
away and whittled down.
The VC

They were silhouettes

*To Allen,
From Dead Paulie*

I remember:
That image burned into my mind
I force it down
It comes up anyway.

“Paulie, Paulie
head down the path over there.”

Punji. Punji. Punji. Punji. Punji.

Remember “Get him
Get him.”
When I bounced a grenade
down that tunnel. *Remember?*
I used call it
yellow fragrance, *remember?*
I pulled it and then let it go.

My headache still isn’t gone, Allen
Headache, headache, headache
Dead Paulie say headache.

Dead Paulie say headache
in my arms.

Cradle headache like a kid baby
Headache whispers in my ear, boom I'm a hero Allen.
Headache sucked my girlfriend dry.
Headache skullfucks the recruiters back home.
Dad confound headache with love.

Headache pushes me out from heaven
Says "it wasn't me, it was him" --it was headache
Notmenotyou, notmenotyou

Now, our bodies is wailing and weeping Allen
and we fall through the clouds.

Dead Paulie and I hit the bottom

ask them Allen
ask them
ask them
Headache, headache, headache *Allen*
How did we get here Allen
Howdie gethere.

I'll ask for you Paul.

The demons repeat,
"We hope you will die for us
when we say."
Wish I hadn't asked.
"Fuck you" I said.
Pop, I'm so sorry.

They repeat,
“Tell us who is at fault tell us who you blame.”

I don't know.

They repeat,
“Tell us who is at fault tell us who you blame.”

the VC Brandon Pop

They repeat,
“Tell us who is at fault tell us who you blame.”

Headache, headache, headache

Headache

Covered their eyes

Headache

Covered their mouths

Headache

Threw them out of helicopters

“We were sent to Vietnam to kill [REDACTED]. But we found instead that we
were killing
women and children.”

I was left behind.

When I left

the ground
When around the men.

We pulled them up
Lifted them in
Threw them out
*I'm so
sorry*

Pop.

“How far you think this one'll go

Paulie?”

“Threw him like a bitch, didn't even fall three inches from the deck”

Punji.
Punji.
Punji.

Throwing gooks out of the helicopter.
It was headache.

I was just a silhouette.

I am already familiar with silence Paulie
The buzzing, ringing
hollow and shrill tones.
The silence when my body shakes.
The silence with the gnats
buzzing across
a buzz in your ear
they buzz when I can't hear what I said
they buzz I can't see what I did

theybuzztheybuzz

The gnats, the gnatsheadacheheadacheheadache

Wish I was guilt free

No guilt free for me

W h o m u s t y o u b l a m e w h o m u s t y o u b l a m e w h o m u s t y o u b l a
m e w h o m u s t y o u b l a m e w h o m u s t y o u b l a m e w h o m u s t y o u b
l a m e w h o m u s t y o u b l a m e w h o m u s t y o u b l a m e w h o m u s t y o
u b l a m e w h o m u s t y o u b l a m e w h o m u s t y o u b l a m e w h o m u s t
y o u b l a m e w h o m u s t y o u b l a m e w h o m u s t y o u b l a

m e

I'm so sorry

Pop

- Allen